



**Press Release**  
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**ALL MILITARY, DON CIVILIANS AND FAMILY MEMBERS IN THE GULF  
REGIONS ARE ASKED TO CALL THE KATRINA HOTLINE AT 1-877-414-  
5358 TO CHECK IN AND RECEIVE INFORMATION ON ASSISTANCE.**

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### Navy Quick to Assist Thousands Displaced by Hurricane Katrina

Washington, D.C -Thousands of military personnel and their family members stationed along the Louisiana and Mississippi Gulf Coast have been uprooted in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, which exploded onto the coastline causing extreme damage Aug. 28. Four Navy installations were near the eye of what the President has labeled one of the nation's greatest natural disasters.

As news media covered the events of the hurricane, millions of Americans watched with increasing concern as the destruction unfolded. But with phone lines down and electricity out, word of those living and working on military installations in the path of the storm was not forthcoming.

Now, as these services are being restored, there is good news circulating. Navy housing managers from Naval Air Station (NAS) New Orleans, La., Naval Support Activity (NSA) New Orleans, La., and Construction Battalion Center (CBC) Gulfport, Miss., have reported

in and are hopeful that their base housing and visitors quarters will be fully restored as soon as possible.

For the military members who call those Navy installations home there is much for which to be thankful. Foremost, there were no casualties. Housing structures are standing and appear basically sound, although many suffered flood and wind damage. Damage assessments are underway and occupants will be allowed in as soon as possible once the structures have been determined to be safe for entry.

The Navy has established several support operations to assist those Sailors, dependents and civilians affected by the storm.

“We’ve all got to wrap our arms around all the families. There is a significant effort going on right now with respects to working to take care of them, whether it’s financial needs, housing needs or any other needs they might have,” said Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. Mike Mullen.

David S. C. Chu, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, issued a memo on Sept. 2 stating that like their military counterparts, families of DoD civilian employees ordered to evacuate their duty stations due to Hurricane Katrina, and whose housing is no longer habitable, can seek temporary safe haven and will receive safe haven allowances, including travel costs, lodging costs and a separate allowance for meals and incidentals. The allowance authorization will extend for the duration of the evacuation order, but no longer than 180 days. Chu announced a similar policy for military families on Sept. 1.

Lt. Brian Weinthal, Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNI) assistant force judge advocate, said a claims office has been set up in Pensacola, Fla., and is fully operational for people who have household goods claims.

“Personnel who are housed in public-private venture housing (PPV) can now submit claims on their personal property, where before the hurricane they were unable to do so,”

Weinthal said. “People have up to two years after their damages are assessed to file a claim,” he said.

Legal centers have been set up by Commander, Naval Legal Service Command (NLSC) to assist those who require legal help as a result of the hurricane. “These facilities will be able to help with wills, power of attorneys and other legal documents that are needed by our Sailors and families,” Weinthal said.

In addition to addressing the needs of the displaced service members on a personal level, the Navy quickly stepped up to the challenge of restoring its installations to operational level. At CBC Gulfport about 400 Seabees went to work immediately after the storm to clear roads, remove debris, start generators and begin repairs.

“We have about 2,500 Seabees here so that helps get things done,” explained Charles Taylor, combined bachelor quarters division officer. All housing personnel are accounted for and most are already back at work, he said.

“We’ll be able to get the Sailors back in the barracks relatively quickly,” Taylor said. “We have 668 permanent party rooms and 400 student bed spaces. All of the students have been relocated, so we can use those rooms for permanent party if needed while repairs are being made to permanent party rooms.”

“One of our permanent party buildings received extensive damage and the visitor quarters (VQ) received major water damage. A full assessment will be made soon,” Taylor added. Family housing personnel at CBC Gulfport have set up temporary offices in a warehouse and are addressing residents’ concerns; the most frequent one being when they can get back in their homes. The answer to that question is being repeated everywhere: as soon as an assessment has been made and the quarters are safe.

NSA New Orleans is housing thousands of people involved in recovery efforts in the evacuated city of New Orleans. Regular base operations are not expected to resume for some time.

“They’re putting up tent cities around the base, even in the VQ courtyard. I’m being told that eventually, once we get the computers back up, the VQs will be housing people at military necessity standards, 72 square feet per person,” explained Simone Tomlin, bachelor housing director.

“Overall, NAS did pretty well as far as the buildings are concerned. The VQ just had first floor flooding. The carpet will have to come out, but otherwise we’re doing good,” Tomlin said, adding that NSA New Orleans had received much more damage.

At NAVSTA Pascagoula, only emergency support personnel are back to work. The assessments are underway, but it could be weeks before a decision is reached about how to proceed with repairs at that installation.

Naval Station Pensacola, which suffered major damage from Hurricane Ivan less than a year ago, is serving as a command center for the Navy’s recovery efforts in the Gulf Coast, where the Navy has sent thousands of Sailors and Seabees and more than 20 ships to the area to provide supplies and medical services and conduct search, rescue and recovery operations, as well as dive, salvage and survey efforts.

If anyone has questions, the Navy Personnel Command has established a 24-hour help line to provide info about family members, pay, travel, financial issues and lodging to active duty, reservists, civilians and family members. The number is 1-877-414-5358.